

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-14

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DRAFTED BY EA/ANP:HHLANGE:RLW

APPROVED BY EA/ANP:LJMOSER

SCI/SA:RYODER (DRAFT)

NSF:JHEG (DRAFT)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, TGEN, NZ

SUBJECT: BUNKERING FOR DEEPFREEZE VESSELS

REF: WELLINGTON 3314

1. NEW ZEALAND MINISTER R. B. ATKINS PRESENTED LETTER TO DEPARTMENT ON DECEMBER 21 STATING IN ESSENCE THAT NZ, ALTHOUGH IT APPRECIATES THE ASSURANCE BY US NAVY TO REPLACE FUEL PUMPED INTO DEEPFREEZE VESSELS AT US BASES OR FROM NAVY TANKERS, FINDS THE ARRANGEMENT UNSATISFACTORY. THE GNZ CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT FUEL SHOULD BE REPLACED IN NEW ZEALAND, WHICH WOULD SOLVE DIFFICULTY POSED BY INFREQUENCY OF VISITS TO US PORTS BY NZ NAVY VESSELS AND WOULD IN ADDITION MORE SATISFACTORILY MEET POSSIBLE OBJECTIONS OF ARAB SUPPLIERS. COMPLETE TEXT ATKINS LETTER BEING FORWARDED BY POUCH.

2. ON JANUARY 23, JAMES HEG, OFFICE OF POLAR PROGRAMS, NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION, ROBERT YODER, SCI/SA, AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HOWARD LANGE, EA/ANP, MET WITH ATKINS AT DEPARTMENT TO

DISCUSS USG DIFFICULTIES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS. HEG EXPLAINED THAT NSF RESPONSIBLE GENERALLY FOR SUPPORT DEEPFREEZE PROGRAM, BUT DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION (COAST GUARD) RESPONSIBLE FOR SUPPORT OF ICEBREAKERS. ALTHOUGH NZ CABINET DECISION AFFECTING ICEBREAKER FUELING TAKEN ON DECEMBER 11, THERE WAS NOT SUFFICIENT TIME TO AUTHORIZE

ADDITIONAL UPLIFT OF APPROX. 850,000 GAL MARINE DIESEL AND ABOUT 400,000 GAL. BUNKER C FOR TANKER THEN LOADING IN VENEZUELA. HEG NOTED THAT IT STILL NOT DETERMINED HOW COAST GUARD CAN PURCHASE EXTRA FUEL, SINCE THE TOTAL OF APPROX. 1.3 MILLION GAL. WAS BUDGETED AT 14 TO 17 CENTS PER GAL., AND NOW COSTS 47 TO 53 CENTS PER GAL. IN VENEZUELA. HEG STATED THAT THIS PROBLEM WILL EVENTUALLY BE RESOLVED AND THAT FUEL WILL BE REPLACED IN NZ, BUT THAT EARLIEST THIS CAN BE EFFECTED WILL BE NEXT TRIP OF TANKER, WHICH IS NEXT YEAR THIS TIME.

3. HEG ALSO OUTLINED ADDITIONAL DEEPFREEZE BUNKER REQUIREMENTS FOR BALANCE OF YEAR. ONE OF THE TANKERS, THE MAUMEE, WILL NEED REFUELING UPON RETURN FROM THE ICE, AND DRY CARGO SHIP TOWLE WILL BE MAKING ROUND TRIP RUN MCMURDO-LITTLETON-MCMURDO.

4. HEG SUGGESTED THAT ATKINS EXPLORE ANOTHER POSSIBILITY WITH WELLINGTON. SINCE NZ NAVY VISITS TO US PORTS MAY BE LIMITED, WOULD A GUARANTEE OF BUNKERS TO NZ MERCHANT SHIPS IN US PORTS BE ACCEPTABLE? THIS, POINTED OUT HEG, WOULD SOLVE PROBLEM OF WASTAGE INVOLVED IN TRANSPORT OF FUEL TO NZ. ATKINS WAS CAUTIONED THAT THIS HAS NOT BEEN EXPLORED ON US SIDE AND WAS NOT AN OFFER, BUT A SUGGESTION FOR POSSIBLY MORE EFFICIENT SOLUTION.

5. ATKINS TOOK INFORMATION WITHOUT MUCH COMMENT BUT WAS INTERESTED IN SUGGESTION PARA 4. HE WILL REPORT TO WELLINGTON AND BE IN CONTACT WITH DEPARTMENT. KISSINGER

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